IN THE CLAIMS:

Cancel originally filed Claims 1-23, and replace them with the following new Claims 24-30.

24) A microlancet device for obtaining a blood sample through the skin of a subject, comprising:

an elongated single crystal silicon substrate having a base end and a penetration end;

a base portion formed at the base end of the silicon substrate for permitting the device to be retained during penetration and sampling; and

a penetration portion formed at the penetration end of the silicon substrate, terminating in a sharp point with smooth continuous cutting profile for easily piercing and penetrating the skin of the subject in order to obtain a blood sample while inflicting minimum pain on the subject.

25) The device of Claim 24, wherein the penetration portion has a thickness cross-section dimension and a width cross-section dimension, at least one of which tapers toward the penetration end to form the sharp point.

26) The device of Claim 25, wherein the thickness cross-section dimension of the penetration portion extends from about 50 micrometers to about 250 micrometers excluding the sharp point, and the width cross-section dimension of the penetration portion also extends from about 50 micrometers to about 250 micrometers excluding the sharp point.

27) The device of Claim 26, wherein the penetration end of the silicon substrate has a length of from about 1 millimeter to about 3 millimeters.

28) The device of Claim 24, further comprising a silicon nitride film over at least part of the base portion.

29) The device of Claim 28, wherein the silicon nitride film is about 2000 Angstroms thick.

30) The device of Claim 24, wherein the microlancet device is disposable.